



For Immediate Release

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Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc Advocates for Increased Economic Development Opportunities

(March 9, 2016) **East Hartford, CT** – Over the past month, Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc has been on a mission at the capitol to further the tools available for economic development in East Hartford. On February 19 and March 4, she testified on two bills which would increase economic development in East Hartford, HB 5484 “An Act Concerning the City and Town Development Act,” and HB 5184 “An Act Extending the Boundaries of the Capital City Development District.”

HB 5484 “An Act Concerning the City and Town Development Act,” would make minor changes to the current law, allowing for municipalities to utilize, redevelop and develop land where “renovation, rehabilitation or construction that the municipality would substantially benefit from,” rather than requiring a finding of “blight and deterioration.” Furthermore, the language would make changes to the section of the law requiring a referendum, which is inconsistent with how many towns typically adopt or utilize typical development tools, such as an Enterprise Zone, which allows for tax benefits and tax increment financing.

In her testimony on March 4, Mayor Leclerc strongly voiced support for the bill.

“The intent of the Connecticut City and Town Development Act is to assist municipalities as they improve their communities through; loans to acquire property, reduce unemployment, alleviate blight, and upgrade building stock,” Mayor Leclerc said. “Adoption of this legislation will help East Hartford to restore buildings to productive use, appropriately develop vacant land, preserve historic properties and create good paying jobs.”

Mayor Leclerc also personally testified before the Planning and Development Committee on February 19 to advocate for HB 5184 “An Act Extending the Boundaries of the Capital City

Development District,” which would allow for investment in many prime development and redevelopment locations that the Capital Region Development Authority development district doesn’t currently cover.

Mayor Leclerc, who is a member of the CRDA Board of Directors, has already gained the full support of the Board of Directors for a boundary expansion and hopes the state legislature will do the same. In her testimony, Mayor Leclerc advocated for many sites in East Hartford that are primed for redevelopment, including: Founder’s Plaza, the Commerce Center, Downtown East Hartford, the commercial corridor of Silver Lane, Rentschler Field and the Goodwin College area.

“East Hartford is a first-ring suburb, which is almost entirely built-out, with less than four percent of raw land for development, making our town ripe for redevelopment,” Mayor Leclerc said in her testimony. “As the cost of our town continues to rise, without a corresponding increase in the grand list or PILOT funding, we face increasing pressures and difficult decisions. This is why it is imperative that East Hartford continually works to create opportunities for redevelopment. Our success as a first-ring suburb further supports the success of our Capital City by strengthening the core business zones with expanded opportunity.”

To view Mayor Leclerc’s recent testimony, please visit the Mayor’s Office page on our website at www.easthartfordct.gov.

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